

## KAPIT TINIG (REACH OUT FOR A VOICE) PROGRAM

For the past three years, LINK Center for the Deaf has been working towards adhering to its mission of promoting awareness of the deaf to the mainstream of society by forging partnerships and linkages, conducting trainings, workshops and seminars and providing relevant information as commitment to the empowerment and integration of the deaf in the community. LINK is able to faithfully keep this duty through an integrated support program.

Kapit Tinig (Reach Out for a Voice) Program is envisioned as a means to provide pertinent and practical growth experience for deaf and hearing students to empower them to lead more active and fulfilled lives in their respective communities with a wider perspective of society from the experiences they have gained from interacting with one another. The program also aims to equip the teachers and caregivers of deaf students from public schools with skills and knowledge for better understanding of the children they are handling to be able to give the necessary support. Activities for the three years of implementation focused on awareness, support systems and empowerment of the deaf.

### **I. Program Accomplishments:**

#### Programs for the Students

1. Partnerships with private schools for hearing students and public schools servicing the deaf through establishment of sign language clubs with interschool activities. (Tinig Kamay Program)
2. Production of Sign Language Curricula and Instructional Materials
3. Educational and enrichment programs such as :
  - a. Remedial and Enrichment Program – Production of Materials for Mathematics
  - b. Arts Program
    - all deaf theatrical presentation “Quiet Box” (promoted deaf awareness and showcased talents of the deaf)
    - Theatre, Dance and Visual Arts (pottery and painting)
  - c. Counseling Program
    - Counseling Forums and Workshops
    - Individual and Group Counseling
4. Health Services
  - Hearing and Dental Care
5. Personal Development Program with Gallaudet University

### Programs for the Teachers

1. Sign Language Training for public school teachers
  - production of Sign Language Curricula and Instructional Materials
  - trained 175 public school teachers and 5 psychologists
  - at least 7 public schools. 4 Elementary Schools (Bagong Silangan, Maligaya, San Agustin and Cubao) and 3 High Schools (Bagong Silang, Quezon City High School and Judge Juan Luna) opened SPED programs for the deaf while other schools increased the percentage of teachers handling deaf students.
2. Scholarship for M.A. in Special Education at the Philippine Normal University
3. Teacher-Training Workshops in Special Education
  - conducted 4 workshops for teachers; 1 SPED forum for administrators

### Programs for the Parents

1. Sign Language Training for parents of the deaf
  - 7 public schools with sign language programs for parents
2. Parents' Workshops
  - conducted 2 workshops for parents

## **II Impact:**

A program under Kapit Tinig with a great impact and a large reach is the teacher's Sign Language Training Program. The training, done at LINK Center's premises, was originally intended for public school teachers from the Division of Quezon City as a response to the Division's need for having teachers who can communicate and teach hearing impaired students in order to open more SPED programs. After almost a year of training and upon seeing the newly-acquired competence of the teachers to communicate with the deaf, the interest in learning sign language among regular teachers in the Division of Quezon City and other Divisions of City Schools significantly increased. Where before the start of the program, LINK had to submit proposals to school administrators for their teachers to undergo sign language training and encourage them to be involved in deaf education, the reverse had happened. The school administrators were the ones who requested to have their teachers trained in order to meet the demands of teaching deaf students.

After the program's **three years of** implementation, at least seven more Divisions of City Schools were provided **sign language** training programs resulting to at least seven public schools that opened **Special Education** programs for the Deaf, both in the Elementary and Secondary Education. **Teaching** competencies of teachers in handling them were also upgraded. In addition, **signing** teacher-deaf student ratio in class has improved and there are more sign language **interpreters** available for the deaf in educational and other settings. Some public school administrators have taken the initiative to offer their

schools as venues for the training program. Teachers who have undergone training at LINK Center conducted sign language training for their colleagues, parents of their students and other members of the community. As a result, LINK Center's other programs such as Arts, Tinig Kamay, Remedial and Enrichment and Community Outreach Programs have also benefited by having a ready pool of instructors to teach sign language and volunteers who can interpret for the beneficiaries of these programs.

The impact of the programs for students, particularly Tinig Kamay, is such that hearing students from private schools are now more aware and are active in the advocacy of promoting awareness of deaf in society. Through this program, hearing students have discovered a way of life that may be different but not less meaningful even without the capacity to hear. For deaf students, the activities have brought about a realization that they can work with their hearing counterparts and that they can go to them and be understood and accepted for who they are. Activities for the students, in general, contributed to greater awareness of the deaf, inculcation of the value of service, social and personal growth, broader experience of society, and greater family and community involvement with the deaf child.

The dedication and spirit of volunteerism on the part of the public school teachers, school administrators, students, parents and other professionals are highly commendable. Despite holding activities on weekdays, many teachers, SPED Coordinators and principals would go to activity sites and help ensure the smooth flow of activities. It was also encouraging to see that the teachers would continuously commute to Quezon City from as far as Navotas and Paranaque every Saturday to attend sign language classes. This truly signified their commitment to be of service to deaf students.

### **III. Lessons Learned Relevant to Replication of Program Activities**

1. The support of School Administrators, particularly, the Principals, is instrumental to the success of the establishment of Special Education (SPED) Programs in the 7 public schools. It has been observed that the good reception of school heads to the idea of having a SPED Center in their schools stemmed from their knowledge of special education and this has helped in the smooth implementation of the Program. Therefore, School Administrators and not only teachers should be part of the training program.
2. All trainees underwent contract signing. This proved to be successful in guaranteeing continuity of the programs. The contract stipulates that the trainees will have to conduct sign language training in their respective schools after the training period. In addition, this measure has also helped the beneficiary schools in their SPED activities through the extra hours of service rendered by trainees.
3. Due to a strong bureaucratic system in public schools, tie up with the Department of Education (DepEd) is a major factor in the success of the Program's implementation. In addition, DepEd is a good source of feedback in terms of

training needs and requirements of public school teachers. Constant collaboration with them provided relevant discussions which have helped in the evaluation and monitoring of the program's success.

The Kapit Tinig program has affected three major groups of people in various forms: a) hearing and deaf students through their personal, interpersonal, academic and physical development; b) public school teachers; and c) parents/caregivers of deaf students through skills development for communication. The program has also helped the beneficiaries as well as the other people who were involved in the different activities realize that the handicap deafness brings should not make the public pity or give sympathy. Instead, they have learned to bring the hopefulness of the matter to light—that better things await those in need when people work together.

With the trainings given, the different programs conceptualized and materials produced, the public schools shall continue to work on the improvement of the Filipino deaf and bring more communities to awareness and education, which in the long run will help strengthen the nation.